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2.0 Purpose of LOCET User Manual:

This document will serve as guidelines and instructions for intake analysts to properly conduct a LOCET interview .

2.1 General Information about LOCET:

All Louisiana Long Term Care Programs require a functional/medical determination prior to entry into the programs. Effective December 2006, this determination will utilize the Louisiana Level of Care Eligibility Tool, LOCET.

The Louisiana Level of Care Eligibility Tool, (LOCET) is a scientifically developed and research-based evaluation tool which will be used in the determination process for Level of Care. The LOCET will be required in conjunction with additional assessment and screening tools as specified by the Department of Health and Hospitals, for the entry to all programs which require a Level of Care for entry to long term programs. LOCET establishes uniform criteria which will serve as the first step in level of care determinations for all long term care services which require such.

LOCET is a standardized, objective and impartial tool which assists in the determination of whether the individual has met the requirements for level of care for long term services.

Other documentation may be required for the determination of level of care as directed by the Department. The evaluative data used for the Level of Care determination must be reviewed and approved by the Department of Health and Hospitals or its designee.

The Louisiana Level of Care Eligibility Tool is composed of numerous questions which are to be asked of the applicant or his or her informant. Contracted call center LOCETs will be conducted over the telephone; other LOCETs will be conducted in person.

LOCET has seven distinct Pathways of potential Level of Care eligibility. In order for LOCET Level of Care to be met for any OAAS Long Term Program, an applicant must meet eligibility requirements in only ONE Pathway. The seven Pathways are:

Activities of Daily Living
Cognitive Performance
Physician Involvement
Treatments and Conditions
Skilled Rehabilitation Therapies
Behavior
Service Dependency

2.2 The Role of the Intake Analyst

During the LOCET interview the Intake Analyst will correctly code answers to specific and ordered questions, using all forms of available information to determine the correct coding needed. The Intake Analyst will take care to elicit answers which will give an accurate picture of the applicant's functional and medical condition. Each question is worded specifically about a particular activity or functional ability, and pertinent to a specific period of time. The Intake Analyst must strive to give the informant the highest level of understanding regarding the questions so that the integrity of the answers will be protected. The Intake Analyst may need to rephrase questioning so that he/she communicates effectively with the informant. Select vocabulary which would be appropriate for an upper elementary level of education in most cases. Questions should not be asked in a leading fashion, but clearly and objectively.

It is extremely important that the Intake Analyst be fully trained on LOCET interview process and proper coding of LOCET answers. Incorrect coding can result in an inappropriate LOCET decision.

2.2.1 Intake Analyst Requirements

1. A LOCET intake analyst must be trained by DHH or by a LOCET-Trained Intake Analyst Trainer who possesses an "IAT" Intake Analyst registration number.

2. A LOCET-Trained Intake Analyst Trainer who possesses an “IAT” Intake Analyst registration number may train only those individuals in his/her own facility. This stipulation is to assure that those trained by this IAT will have access to the trainer as questions arise regarding proper LOCET coding.
3. A LOCET intake analyst must complete and submit the official Intake Analyst Registration form found at the OAAS website: www.oaas.dhh.louisiana.gov.
4. A LOCET intake analyst must possess an official LOCET Intake Analyst Registration Number which has been issued by OAAS State Office. The LOCET Intake Analyst Registration Number will be issued after OAAS reviews the educational and work history information submitted on the Registration Form. This LOCET Intake Analyst Registration Number must be shown on all LOCET documents submitted to OAAS.
5. An Intake Analyst must never share his or her number with anyone else.
6. In the event of an Intake Analyst losing his/her Intake Analyst number, a written request must be submitted by fax to OAAS for reissuance of that number. The request form is the official Intake Analyst Registration form found at the OAAS website: www.oaas.dhh.louisiana.gov. The form must be annotated as an “update” and faxed to OAAS.

2.2.2 Interviewing Techniques

2.2.2.1 Avoid Leading Questions

Intake Analysts must always be aware of the manner in which they are asking the questions to applicants. The questions should be asked in an objective manner. That is, they should be worded so as not to suggest an answer.

For instance: “Did you have help preparing your supper last night?” is a question which is phrased in an objective manner. The listener is not swayed by anything in the wording which might cause him/her to want to answer one way or the other. The listener is left to answer any way he/she wants, and therefore, is more likely to give accurate information than when answering a leading question.

An example of the same question, phrased in a leading manner would be: “You didn’t have any help preparing supper last night, did you?” In this example, the questioner added a predisposition to the question and alerted the listener that he/she did not expect the answer to be “yes.” A listener who is easily swayed in conversation might answer “yes” to this leading question more easily than to argue with the questioner.

Leading questions must be avoided in an effort to obtain full, complete and accurate information during the LOCET interview.

The Pathway questions must be asked in the order in which they appear in LOCET. The scoring method built within the LOCET Software will identify applicants who meet LOCET Level of Care based upon their LOCET answers.

The analyst will ask the designated questions clearly and slowly enough for the informant to understand and comprehend. The analyst will answer any questions that the informant may ask regarding the meaning of the question or any clarification of answer selections. The analyst will encourage the informant to give accurate answers so that a clear picture of the applicant's physical and functional condition may be determined.

2.2.2.2 Use Best Judgment

The Intake Analyst will occasionally encounter situations where the applicant states one answer in obvious contrast to observed information to the contrary. When this occurs, the Intake Analyst must probe further, either with others who are available to ask, or from chart records which might be available to give information relative to the look-back period.

An example of a situation where this might be needed is this: An elderly applicant states that he/she received "physical assistance" in the form of weight-bearing assistance with the ADL of transferring four times in the last seven days. When the Intake Analyst asks about the ADL of toileting, the applicant states, "No, I did that by myself." Since the ADL of toileting includes transferring on and off the toilet, additional probing would be warranted here in order to ensure that the activity of toileting is coded correctly on the LOCET. If, for example, the Intake Analyst learns that the applicant did indeed receive assistance from another person with toileting in the form of weight-bearing assistance three or more times during the look-back period, the LOCET answer for toileting should reflect that weight-bearing level of assistance was received, even though the applicant claims to have performed toileting task independently. In this way the Intake Analyst is using his or her best judgment in weighing all sources of information in order to arrive at the best and most appropriate answer for this item. This practice must be used for each item on the LOCET in order to obtain an accurate picture of the individual during the applicable look-back period for each LOCET item.

The answers that the Intake Analyst codes in the LOCET must be the analyst's best judgment of the correct answer based on all available sources of information.

2.3 General Process for Nursing Facility Applicants

For intake to Nursing Facilities, frequently the LOCET intake interview will occur at the Nursing Facility or at a hospital prior to discharge to a Nursing Facility. Other places, such as applicants' homes, or hospitals may be among the locations where the Nursing Facility LOCET interviews take place.

A hardcopy version of LOCET will be completed by a registered Intake Analyst. That hardcopy LOCET will be sent to the Office of Aging and Adult Services (OAAS) Regional Office or its designee. The reviewer at

the OAAS will enter the hardcopy data into the LOCET software. Communication will then be made from the OAAS to the Nursing Facility and to the Parish Medicaid Office as to the disposition of the LOCET determination.

In the event of a denial on LOCET Level of Care, the applicant will be sent a denial letter which contains instructions on how to appeal the denial decision.